CMS' RDS Program E-Newsletter

Useful Links:

RDS Center
Home page for the CMS RDS Center
http://rds.cms.hhs.gov/

CMS Coordination of Benefits/VDSA Web Site
Home page for information on submitting retiree files through the Voluntary Data Sharing Agreement
http://new.cms.hhs.gov/
EmployerServices/
03_EmployerVDSA.asp

CMS Employer Page
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Web Site specifically for employers
http://www.cms.hhs.gov/
EmplUnionPlanSponsorInfo/

Contact Us:

http://rds.cms.hhs.gov
RDS@cms.hhs.gov
(877) RDS-HELP or
(877) 737-4357
(877) RDS-TTY0 or
(877) 737-8890

National Conference Calls - Playback Available

The following National Conference Calls are now available as mp3 audio files.

- [August National Conference Call - The RDS Application Process: A Refresher](#)

- [July National Conference Call - RDS Payment Request - A Follow-up](#)

- [June National Conference Call - Vendors and the RDS Program](#)

RDS Application Reminder to Plan Sponsors

CMS' RDS Program would like to remind Plan Sponsors that will participate in the RDS Program for the 2007 plan year that they must submit a new application via the RDS Secure Web Site no later than 90 days prior to the start of the plan year. (For detailed information on the application process, please see the How To Apply document on the RDS Program Web Site.) As part of a new application, Plan Sponsors must submit a new retiree list for that new plan year. (For detailed information on the retiree list submission process, please see the How To Upload a File document on the RDS Program Web Site.)

Application extensions of 30 days can be requested online using the RDS Secure Web Site. However, application extensions must be submitted no later than 90 days prior to the start of the plan year. (For detailed information on how to request an extension, please see the How To Request an Application Extension document on the RDS Program Web Site.)

RDS Reporting Cost and Requesting Payment Training Webinar

Playback has been added to the June 29, 2006 RDS Reporting Cost and Requesting Payment Training Webinar.

Webinar Setup

After clicking on the playback link, you will be asked to select the desired streaming media players option in which to play back the Webinar. In order to access the Webinar event, you must have one of the following streaming media players and versions installed on your computer:

- Microsoft Windows Media Player 9
- RealNetworks Real Player 10 and RealOne

If you do not have a streaming media player installed, the Webinar event may not play properly. If you are not sure what streaming media players you have installed, or not sure what player to use, you can test your system via the FAQ (see link below).

Problems and Additional Information

If you experience problems viewing or listening to the event, please review the following minimum requirements and frequently asked questions at: http://www.genesys.com/ges/faq/.

Please use the FAQ link if you have any questions. The RDS Center will not be able to assist you with specific media player or technical problems.

Playback Link

The playback link can be accessed at:
http://rds.cms.hhs.gov/news/announcements/playback2/index.htm

CMS' RDS Center Announces Release of Cost Report & Payment Request Functionalities on the RDS Secure Web Site

CMS' RDS Center released new Cost Report and Payment Request functionality to the RDS Secure Web Site on Saturday, July 1, 2006. This functionality will allow Plan Sponsors to report costs and request payments for their qualified covered retirees. For specific information on how to perform the cost reporting and payment request steps, refer to the How To Submit Cost Data and How To Submit an Interim Payment Request documents on the RDS Program Web Site.

Helpful Tips

This section is intended to provide you with helpful tips about relevant RDS topics. The focus of this month's "Helpful Tips" section answers the common Retiree List and New Plan Year questions and provides helpful resources.

Retiree List

- Your retiree file **MUST** be fomatted correctly, in order for it to be processed by the RDS Center. For more information, please see [information on file layout if sending via the RDS Secure Web Site](#) and [information on file layout if submitting via mainframe](#).

- If you are having trouble uploading your file via the RDS Secure Web Site the RDS Center suggests that you:

  - Save your retiree file on a local drive (e.g. c:\\) and not on your network. Uploading files from the network can be slow and may cause the RDS Secure Web Site to timeout.
  - If your file takes more than 5 minutes to upload, stop/cancel the upload process, and try again.
  - There is a known issue regarding file upload capabilities in Microsoft Internet Explorer version 6.0 running on Windows XP with Service Pack 2. Microsoft has posted a workaround http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=889334. The RDS Center recommends that you work with your Technical Support Desk to install the workaround. However, due to the technical nature of the workaround we suggest that users try using another web browser (e.g. Firefox) rather than attempting Microsoft's fix. Microsoft has announced that a patch should be available later this year.

New Plan Year

If you are an existing Plan Sponsor, you need to:

  - Start a new application.
  - Complete your application.
  - Submit an initial retiree file.

If you are a new Plan Sponsor, you need to:

  - Create a Plan Sponsor Account.
  - Register RDS Secure Web Site users.
  - Start a new application.
  - Complete your application.
  - Submit an initial retiree file.

The first eight application sections, excluding Assign Designee(s), **MUST** have a status of **Complete** before the application may be submitted. When the Authorized Representative completes the **Plan Sponsor Agreement** section, your application will be submitted until an initial retiree file has been successfully processed and the application information has been validated by the RDS Center. Depending on your selected retiree file submission method, go to: [How To Upload A File](#) or [How to Communicate Retiree Information Using the Mainframe](#) for more information on submitting retiree information to the RDS Center.